

Message

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**From:** Bloomberg Environment  
- Environment & Energy  
Report  
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**To:** Thomas, Marc  
[Thomas.Marc@epa.gov]  
**Subject:** First Move: Senators'  
Energy Wish Lists •  
Lithium Drilling • Perry  
Visits Nuke Plant

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## **Senators' Energy Wish Lists • Lithium Drilling • Perry Visits Nuke Plant**



By Chuck McCutcheon

Congress hasn't passed a broad-ranging energy bill in 12 years. But with the Democratic-run House itching to address climate change and energy, senators of both parties are getting their energy wish lists ready.

Significant backing exists among a number of senators to extend wind and solar tax incentives and add battery energy storage to that mix; boost funding of research into next-generation energy technologies; and support commercial deployment of carbon capture technology that separates carbon dioxide, a greenhouse gas, from other emissions of power plants and other facilities so it can be permanently stored or used.

Alaska GOP Sen. Lisa Murkowski, who heads the Senate's energy panel, said she won't unveil energy legislation until July at the earliest. Like other

Republicans, she fiercely opposes the ambitious House climate policies floated in the Green New Deal resolution—but says deals could be struck with the House.

**LITHIUM DRILLING:** A Canadian company wants to explore federal land near Death Valley to look for lithium, but environmentalists are worried about the consequences if it uncovers large amounts of the mineral, Emily C. Dooley reports.

Lithium powers mobile phones, laptops, and electric vehicles. Battery Mineral Resources California Inc. plans to drill in Inyo County in what the company says would be North America's largest lithium exploration project.

"We have identified these lands as very important to the American people," says Frazier Haney, associate southern California director for the Conservation Lands Foundation "I know it is exploratory, but it could lead the way to a project that covers thousands of acres of conservation land. The fact of the matter is these lands are spoken for conservation."

**PERRY TO NUKE PLANT:** Energy Secretary Rick Perry visits Georgia's Vogtle Nuclear Plant, where he is expected to finalize \$3.7 billion in loan guarantees to Southern Co. and its partners building a troubled reactor project there.

The source of the aid: an Energy Department loan program that has been in the Trump administration's crosshairs since before President Trump's inauguration, when his transition team saw it as corporate welfare.

That program is best known for backing a half-billion-dollar loan guarantee to failed solar-panel maker Solyndra LLC, a frequent target of Republican criticism during the Obama administration. But the program also issued a \$465 million loan to automaker Tesla Inc. and backed some of the first large-scale U.S. solar photovoltaic farms. Bloomberg News is covering.

## OTHER STORIES WE'RE COVERING

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- The Climate Leadership Conference wraps up in Baltimore, with a keynote by Jean-Christophe Flatin, Mars Inc.'s president of innovation, science, technology and its nutrition business Mars Edge. Abby Smith is covering.
- The risks of lead to children are well recognized and tools exist to predict exposures. But that hasn't been the case for adults, says Tom Neltner, chemicals policy director for the Environmental Defense Fund. The EPA is

updating a model that helps predict adult exposure to lead. Low-level environmental lead exposure is a largely overlooked risk factor for death from heart disease, Neltner says, citing recent research. Pat Rizzuto is monitoring.

- Heavy cyclones are expected to hit Australia this weekend, causing power outages and other potential widespread disruption. Bloomberg News is monitoring.

## QUOTE OF THE DAY

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Smoke rises above homes following a fire at a petrochemical storage site in Deer Park, Texas.

Photographer: Scott Dalton/Bloomberg via Getty Images

“This is a real risk to human health, not theoretical.”

—Elena Craft, senior director for climate and health at the Environmental Defense Fund, describing the cancer-causing toxics wafting across Houston’s eastern suburbs after a chemical fire.

## AROUND THE WEB

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- Some crocodiles like having a nuclear plant in their backyard.
- A 73-year-old New York artist has found a new use for garbage: Fashion items.
- More women means more conservation, according to a new study that examined using gender quotas to promote female involvement in making environmental decisions.
- Wind energy companies need to keep track of bats, which can fly into turbines. An initiative funded by the Energy Department and National Renewable Energy Laboratory is holding a webinar on the subject.

## TODAY’S EVENTS

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- **All Day • Water •** World Water Day features events in the U.S. and other countries.

- **All Day • Energy** • University of California, Berkeley's energy institute [holds conference](#) on energy research and policy.
- **4 p.m. • Alaska** • National Weather Service [holds webinar briefing](#) on Alaska climate outlook.

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